

Strategic Warning Staff
Washington, D.C. 20381

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29 October 1979 25X1

MEMORANDUM FOR: Warning Working Group

SUBJECT: USSR-Afghanistan

The NIO/W asked that we forward the attached to all members of the WWG.

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Attachment a/s

DOUGLAS J. MacEACHIN
Director

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Strategic Warning Staff
Washington, D.C. 20501

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26 October 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: National Intelligence Officer for Warning

SUBJECT: USSR-Afghanistan

1. We are concerned that in the month that has elapsed since the USSR-Afghanistan Alert Memorandum and the IIM Soviet Options in Afghanistan were issued, the Soviets appear to have put themselves in position to move a larger ground combat force into Afghanistan in less time and affording less advance warning than was believed possible at the time those papers were written.

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4. In sum, if [redacted] motorized divisions located on the Afghanistan border are now manned at higher states of readiness, as the evidence suggests they may be, the Soviets would be able, within about a 48 hour period, to insert an airborne division (the 105th at Fergana) into Kabul, a motorized rifle division into Kandahar, and at least major elements of a motorized rifle division into Mazar-i-Sharif. A major ground force intervention along these lines would not need to be preceded by much if any visible mobilization of army and front level support elements. [redacted]

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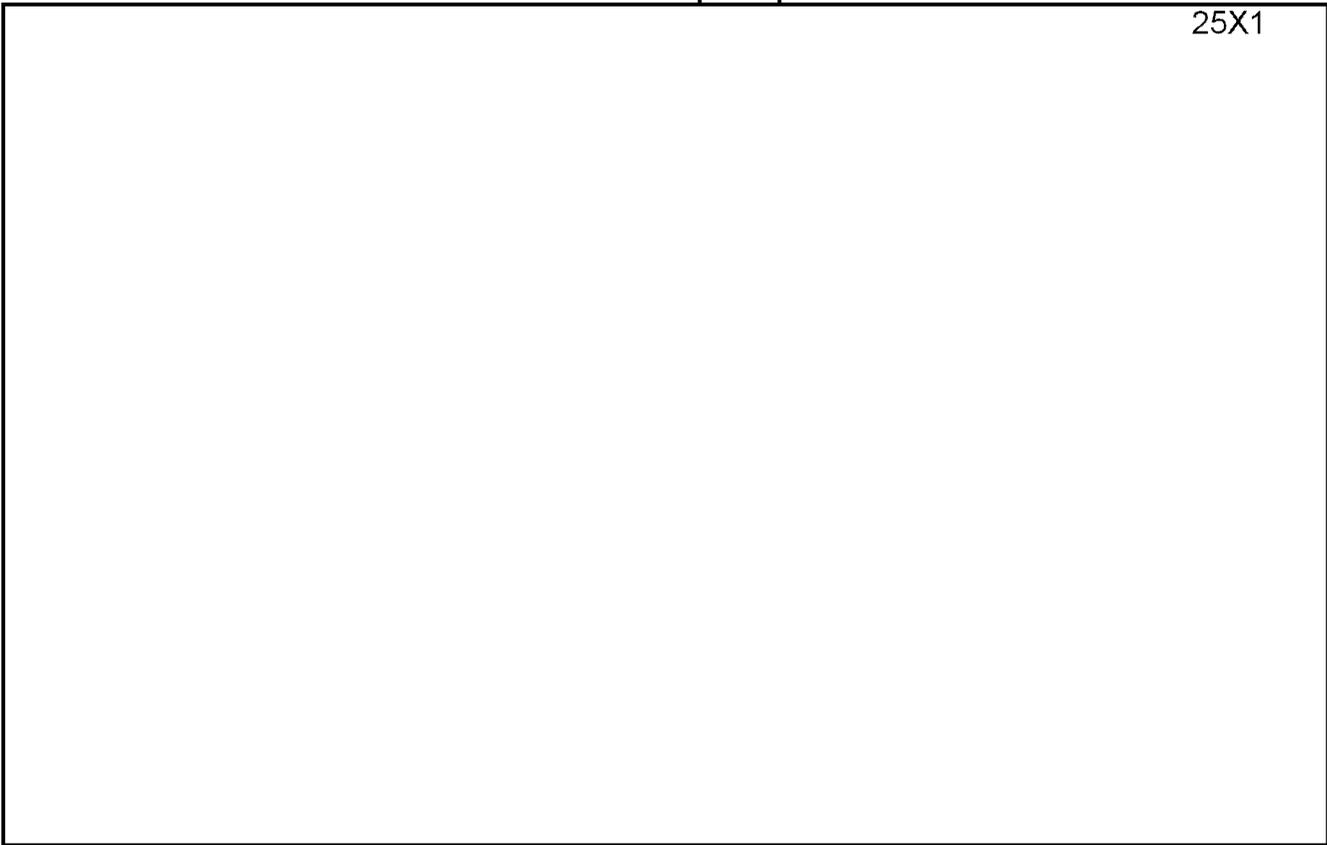


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5. At the time the IIM Soviet Options in Afghanistan was being drafted the consensus of community analysts was that the Soviets could insert an airborne division and possibly some individual combat units of battalion or regimental size while affording us little warning but that any major military action beyond that probably would have to be the kind of multi-division action that would be clearly indicated well in advance. While that judgement may have been consistent with the situation at the time, we do not believe it remains valid.

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8. Adding to the ominous nature of these military developments are:

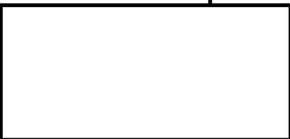
a. The recent mutiny of at least elements of an Afghan army division near Kabul. Based on reports of the duration and scale of the measures to suppress it, this latest mutiny appears to be the most serious break yet in the cohesiveness of the Afghan army. Whether and where another uprising might take place must concern the Soviets. The worst case they

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probably envisage is a defection (as opposed to a mutiny) of one or two whole divisions to the Muslim insurgency. A military coup could be accommodated by the Soviets, but a major defection could cause the entire situation to become unravelled, making the Soviet options even more unpleasant than they are at present.

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